

**NOMINATION OF THE MOWRY ADDISON HOUSE
TO BE DESIGNATED AS A CITY HISTORIC LANDMARK**

CITY COUNCIL REPORT



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MOWRY ADDISON HOUSE - HISTORIC NOMINATION STAFF REPORT

Name of Property Mowry Addison House
Address of Property 5134 Carnegie Street
Property Owner Keith Cochran
Nominated by:..... Keith Cochran
Date Received:..... January 17, 2020
Parcel No.: 80-G-239
Ward:..... 10th
Zoning Classification:..... R1A-VH
Neighborhood..... Lawrenceville
Council District:..... 7 – Gross

FORMAL ACTION REQUIRED BY THE HISTORIC REVIEW COMMISSION:

1. Act on the Preliminary Determination of Eligibility for Historic Designation (5 February 2020)
2. Conduct a public hearing for the Historic Designation (5 March 2020)
3. Review the Report prepared by staff for the property in question, and make a recommendation to the City Council on the Historic Designation (5 March 2020)

FORMAL ACTION REQUIRED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

4. Conduct a public hearing for the Historic Designation (25 February 2020)
5. Review the recommendations of the Historic Review Commission and make a recommendation to the City Council on the Historic Designation (10 March 2020)

FORMAL ACTION REQUIRED BY THE CITY COUNCIL:

6. Conduct a public hearing
7. Review the recommendations of the Historic Review Commission and the City Planning Commission and take action on the Historic Designation

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FACTS

1. On 17 January 2020, the staff of the Historic Review Commission received an application for the nomination of the Mowry Addison House to be designated as a City Historic Structure.

2. **Description of the Mowry Addison House** (as extracted from the nomination form)

The Mowry-Addison Mansion is located on the east side of Carnegie Street on a lot larger than the average lot size in the Lawrenceville neighborhood. Unlike other dwellings along Carnegie Street, the property is set back from the street. The Mowry-Addison Mansion is a two-and-a-half-story high, five-bay-wide, brick-bearing dwelling in the Greek Revival style. The dwelling rests on a cut-stone foundation, clad in an American-bond brick pattern, and capped with a side gable roof covered in asphalt shingles. The foundation level is raised, revealing the cut stone. Dentils are located within the cornice. Cornice returns are located in the gable ends. A frieze is located beneath the cornice on the façade (west elevation). An internal brick chimney is located within the east gable slope.

The primary façade (west elevation) faces Carnegie Street, is five bays wide, and symmetrical. Fenestration includes six-over-six, double-hung, wood-sash windows. The central, second-story window is flanked by narrow, four-over-four, double-hung, wood-sash windows. Fenestration openings have stone sills and lintels with stone rosette designs at the end of the lintels. The dwelling's primary entrance is centered on the façade within the porch. The façade is surrounded by sidelights and a transom window in a lintel-and-post design. The porch is three bays wide, and capped with flat roof supported by blonde brick pillars, which were likely twentieth-century alterations. The property is surrounded by a modern, wrought-iron fence with historic posts framing primary walkway to the house's entrance.

The rear façade (east elevation) faces Natrona Way and also has a symmetrical form. Fenestration consists of six-over-six, double-hung, wood-sash windows with plain stone lintels and sills. A full-width, partially-enclosed porch with two entrances. The enclosed portion is clad in vinyl siding. The porch is capped with a flat roof supported by wood pillars and wood posts.

The north and south side elevations contain no additional entrances, but have six-over-six, double-hung, wood-sash windows. The windows in the half-story on either side have a six-over-six, double-hung, wood-sash windows flanked by narrow, four-over-four, double-hung, wood-sash windows. Fenestration openings have stone sills and stone lintels. The lintels have rosette designs, similar to the primary façade on the west elevation.

3. **History of the Mowry Addison House** (as extracted from the nomination form)

The Mowry-Addison Mansion ("Echo") was constructed between 1830 and 1832 on a 100-acre tract situated between the Allegheny River and present-day 51st and 52nd Streets, extending back over a mile. The property's layout reflected a common rural landscape of the period, known as a ribbon farm, which had a short width of riverfront and large depth containing the farmland. This allowed several farm owners access to the river for transportation reasons without compromising fields and.

At the time of dwelling's construction, the property was owned by Dr. Peter Mowry and his wife, Eliza Addison Mowry. The property was conveyed to Mowry by John and Barbara Fritchman of Versailles Township for \$4,500. Dr. Peter Mowry was one of Pittsburgh's most prominent physicians during the first third of the 19th century. Mowry was born in Pittsburgh in 1770 and began to study medicine at age 14. Mowry's medical practice made him wealthy, and he appears to have also profited from owning real estate in Downtown Pittsburgh, Lawrence County, Pennsylvania, and near Canton, Ohio. Mowry also taught medical students, was a trustee of the Western University of Pennsylvania (now the University of Pittsburgh) and was a vestryman of Trinity Episcopal Church, Downtown. He died in 1833, not long after 5134 Carnegie Street

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was built. Following his death, he willed the dwelling and furniture to his wife. Eliza Mowry lived in the mansion with family members until she died in 1871. During her residency, she sold a portion of her property that abutted the river to industrial development. The Carnegie, Kloman & Company utilized the land for the construction of the Lucy Furnace, which operated until its demolition in 1930. The Keystone Bridge Works also owner part of the former Mowry land near the river.

In 1872, the Mowry-Addison Mansion and its land were purchased by a group comprised primarily of business partners of Andrew Carnegie for \$170,000. The purchasers, who included Carnegie's brother Thomas, David McCandless, William Coleman, and John Scott, were associated with the Lucy Furnace. The group subdivided the former Mowry property into streets and building lots. The Mowry Mansion and associated outbuildings appear to have been the only buildings located southeast of Butler Street. Between 1872 and 1873, the partners subdivided the property into streets and approximately 244 building lots southwest of 52nd Street, in what was known as the Plan of Lots laid out by Carnegie and Company.

The Carnegie and Company Plan filled in with houses between 1873 and the early twentieth century, as subdivisions of other former ribbon farms between 52nd and 55th streets did at the same time. Nearly all of the lots were 20 feet wide by 100 feet deep. Some property owners bought two or more lots, and constructed pairs or rows of party wall houses. The former Mowry-Addison residence on Carnegie Street was not demolished for subdivision, unlike the other ribbon farm houses in the Tenth Ward, and today occupies the 100-by-100-foot parcel on which it has stood for more than a century. The group of business partners chartered the Allegheny Land Company in 1882 in order to sell the remaining unsold lots in their subdivision.

Karns Bracken, a public works contractor, and his family lived at 5134 Carnegie Street between 1885 and 1907. Bracken purchased the lot at its present size for \$5,500. John M. Kerr, the proprietor of a saloon at 51st and Butler streets, purchased the mansion from Bracken, and owned it until 1920. In January 1920, when the 1920 census was taken, John and Winifred Kerr rented 5134 Carnegie Street to Margaret Dogherty, a widow who used the house as a boarding house. George Greguras purchased the property from Kerr in 1920, but only retained ownership for a few months (Peterson 2004).

Between 1921 and 1973, the Mowry-Addison Mansion was owned by the Slovenian Catholic Independent Beneficial Society Blessed Virgin Mary. In 1923, the organization changed its name to the Slovenian Eagle Society; the title to 5134 Carnegie Street was placed in the name of the new organization in 1925. The Slovenian Catholic Independent Beneficial Society Blessed Virgin Mary also known as the Slovenian Catholic Mutual Society Blessed Virgin Mary) was founded in 1910. Its charter stated that the organization's purpose was "the maintenance of a society for the support of its members in their sickness, and in case of death of a member, to take care that the burial of the deceased will be performed according to Catholic rite." Membership was limited to those who were "Slovenian or a Slav of Roman Catholic faith," between ages 16 and 45.

The mansion appears to have been used primarily for recreational purposes by the organization, although records of the 1930 census show that part of it was rented to a family headed by a Slovenian immigrant steel mill worker. The Slovenian Eagle Society and its predecessor's 52-year ownership of 5134 Carnegie Street comprised the longest period of ownership of the mansion, exceeding the Mowry ownership by ten years (Peterson 2004).

The Mowry-Addison Mansion was owned by the Pittsburgh Electric Club between 1973 and 2004, when it was purchased by Carnegie Commons LLC for use as architectural offices (Peterson 2004).

4. Significance of the Mowry Addison House *(as extracted from the nomination form)*

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The *Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances, Title 11, Historic Preservation, Chapter 1: Historic Structures, Districts, Sites and Objects* lists ten criteria, at least one of which must be met for Historic Designation. The nominator is of the opinion that the Mowry Addison House meets several of the criteria as follows.

1) Its exemplification of an architectural type, style, or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship;

The Mowry-Addison Mansion is a significant example of domestic Greek Revival style within the city of Pittsburgh and its Lawrenceville neighborhood.

According to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission:

A typical Greek Revival style house in our state has a front facing gable, sometimes with a return, a front entry with a flat entablature and pilasters, or perhaps a repeating pediment over the front door. Most Greek Revival style buildings have broad cornices, some featuring small windows at the frieze or attic level. Some Greek Revival style buildings have true temple form with massive, bold columns across the entire front façade. The columns may be rounded and topped with classical order capitals, or they may be square paneled posts. This temple form is more common on high style mansions or public buildings like banks, schools or government offices. Greek Revival style buildings can take several forms (even appearing occasionally as townhouses with strong columned front entries), but are most easily identifiable by the presence of a columned entry, a front facing gable or pediment, pilasters at the front façade corners, or a wide cornice with small windows (PHMC n.d.).

Although this description portrays a high style of Greek Revival architecture, several of the characteristics are transferrable. The Mowry-Addison Mansion features many Greek Revival characteristic elements including side-gabled, symmetrical form, cornice returns, dentils, friezes, carved stone corner blocks, and an entryway surrounded by a transom and sidelights. Inside, the elaborate plaster and wood ornamentation of the entry hall also reflect classical orders, often a hallmark of Greek Revival design. Greek Revival dwellings with one-story or absent porches are common occurrences in the northeastern quadrant of the country.

Locally, it is similar to other estate homes from the early to mid-nineteenth century in the area, such as the Ewalt House, the only other remaining mid-nineteenth-century Greek Revival dwelling located at the corner of Home Street & Eden Way in Lawrenceville. Other surviving examples of Greek Revival architecture within the city of Pittsburgh are rare because of changing forces over time.

Outside of Lawrenceville, many buildings from the early 19th century were lost during the Great Fire of 1845, when approximately one third of all buildings in downtown Pittsburgh burned. The Burke Building (209 Fourth Ave.) is a notable exception and largely regarded as the only remaining Greek Revival commercial structure in Pittsburgh (the rafters in the attic still show scars of the early 19th conflagration). Other notable examples of residential Greek-Revival architecture can be found in Pittsburgh's North Side as the former Allegheny City was separated from downtown Pittsburgh and largely spared the worst impact from the Great Fire. In comparison to the Mowry-Addison Mansion, however, these structures are far more modest in scale and relate to a very different socio-economic historical narrative and planning development. These houses were typically two to two-and-a-half stories in height and housed merchants and other people connected to the Allegheny Canal. Examples of this architectural type, with varying degrees of integrity, maybe seen in 512 to 520 Pressley Street in Pittsburgh's Deutschtown neighborhood.

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2) *Its exemplification of a pattern of neighborhood development or settlement significant to the cultural history or traditions of the City, whose components may lack individual distinctions.*

The property represents settlement patterns of the prior to the expansion and annexation of Lawrenceville the second half of the nineteenth century. The property formerly contained 100 and extended from the Allegheny River to Stanton in a layout known as a farm. Ribbon farms, or long strip farms, are agricultural properties divided into divisions, typically along a These property divisions maximized the number of accessible by the associated waterway or transportation



Ribbon Farms in the present-day Tenth Ward.

early area during property acres Avenue ribbon lots and narrow river. farms route.

Ribbon farms were historically used throughout the world in various cultures, and first appeared in North America during the seventeenth century. This agricultural landscape typology expanded throughout the continent, particularly in areas of French influence, such as the St. Lawrence River, Detroit, and parts of Louisiana. Advantages of these farms included multiple landowner waterway access, increased variation of soils and elevation, and neighboring dwellings that promoted socialization. Ribbon farms in Western Pennsylvania appear to be a rare occurrence by the mid-nineteenth century due to rapid development along the region’s three primary rivers. By 1872, the only existing ribbon farms in the area were located in the present-day tenth ward and Sharpsburg. The tenth ward ribbon farms began to experience a loss of land by the 1860s as industries sought land along the Allegheny River and Allegheny Valley Railroad. These farms varied in width, with most of the dwellings being located along present-day Carnegie Street and Butler Street. During this period, the Mowry farm had six documented outbuildings and a secondary dwelling. In the 1860s, Eliza Mowry sold part of her land north of Butler Street for industrial development. Carnegie, Kloman & Company built the Lucy Furnace on the former portion of Mowry’s land. The Keystone Bridge Company also utilized part of Mowry’s former property. Eliza Mowry died in 1871 and her estate was conveyed to Thomas Carnegie, the younger brother of Andrew Carnegie, and three business partners. Between 1872 and 1873, Carnegie and partners subdivided the property into streets and approximately 244 building lots. The Carnegie and Company Plan experienced rapid development between 1873 and the turn-of-the-twentieth century, as other ribbon farms located northeast of the former Mowry property followed suit. As such, the Mowry-Addison Mansion serves as a surviving vestige of the Allegheny River’s former ribbon farms and allowed for the development of 51st Street, 52nd Street, Keystone Street, Carnegie Street, and Ruby Street, as well as Berlin Way, Dresden Way, Natrona Way, and Kent Way.

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10. Its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh

The Mowry-Addison Mansion is distinctive in its design and plan compared to the other dwellings located on Carnegie Street and throughout Lawrenceville. Most dwellings in the neighborhood are late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century rowhouses, reflecting styles from the period, such as Italianate, Second Empire, and Romanesque. The Mowry-Addison Mansion is a unique and prominent dwelling in the neighborhood, as it predates all of the surrounding development. Few farmhouses from the early nineteenth are extant and frequently experience modern development threats due to the size of their lots.

5. Integrity

The Mowry-Addison Mansion retains a significant amount of remaining historical integrity. Its location is unchanged since construction in the 1830s, despite a drastic change in the surrounding landscape. The building retains several historical and essential stylistic features, including cornice returns, a prominent frieze, dentil, lintels, and sidelights and transom surrounding the entrance. Although no longer part of a working farm, the dwelling’s setback from the road and early style still portray its historical character.

Some features of the building have been altered in its nearly 200-year existence. The front entrance has been replaced. The blonde brick pillars were also likely added in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The rear porch has also been partially enclosed. Despite these alterations, the resource is one of the last remaining and most significantly preserved regional ribbon farm dwellings from its period of construction.

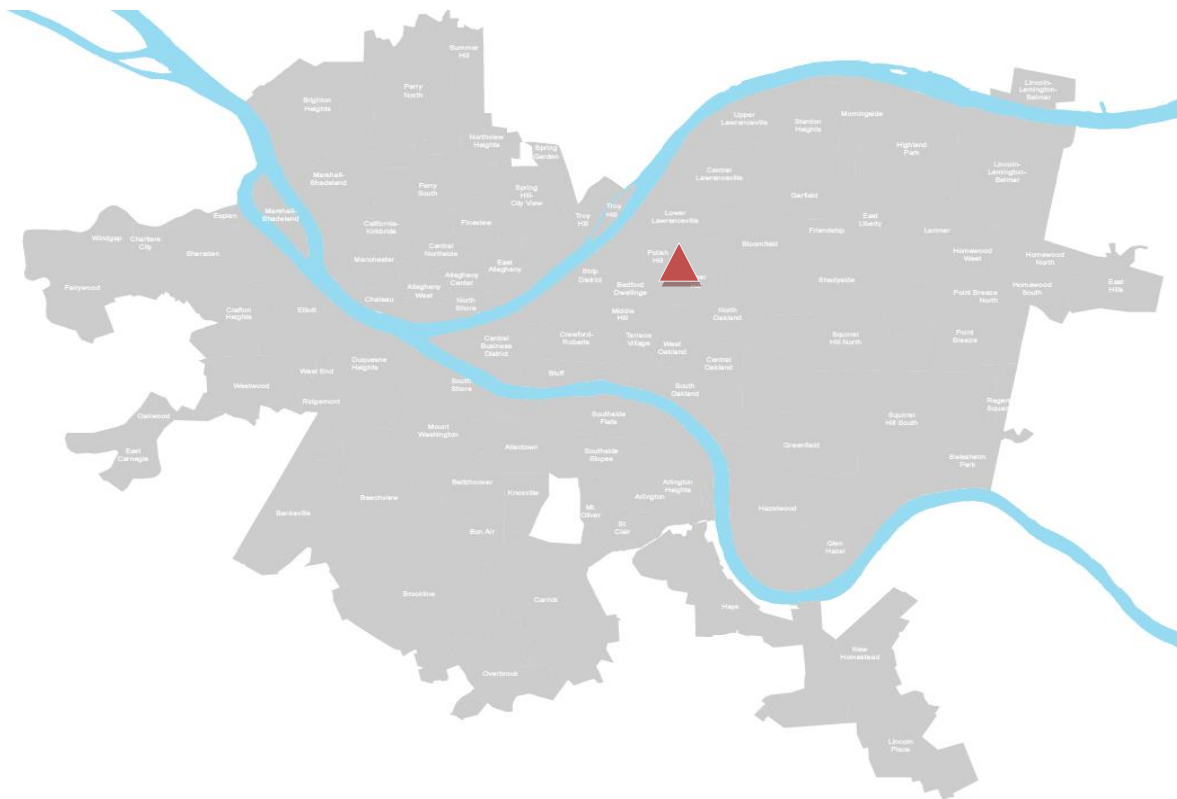
6. Photos



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7. Maps



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8. Recommendation of the Historic Review Commission

The Historic Review Commission held a public hearing regarding the designation of the Mowry Addison House. On March 5, 2020 the Commission voted to recommend to City Council that it designate the Mowry Addison House as historic.

9. Recommendation of the City Planning Commission

The City Planning Commission held a public hearing regarding the designation the Mowry Addison House. On March 10, 2020 the Commission voted to recommend to City Council that it designate the Mowry Addison House as historic.

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10. Meeting Minutes

HRC MINUTES – FEBRUARY 5, 2020 – PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION HEARING

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Pittsburgh HRC – February 5, 2020

***Mowry-Addison House
5134 Carnegie Street***

Historic Nomination

Owner:

Keith Cochran
5134 Carnegie Street
Pittsburgh, Pa 15201

Ward: 9th

Lot and Block: 80-G-239

Inspector:

Nominator:

Keith Cochran
5134 Carnegie Street
Pittsburgh, Pa 15201

Council District: 7th

Nomination Received: 1/17/20

National Register Status: Listed: Eligible:

Proposed Changes: Nomination for historic designation.

Discussion:

1. Ms. Spooner makes a short presentation on the property. She states that the nominator found that the property is significant under Criterion 3, exemplification of a distinguished architectural type, style, or design, Criterion 8, exemplification of a significant pattern of neighborhood development or settlement, and Criterion 10, its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh, and that the property does retain integrity.
 2. Ms. Aguirre asks for public comment.
 3. Ms. Jill Joyce steps to the podium. She expresses her support for the nomination.
 4. Mr. Bill Joyce steps to the podium. He expresses his support for the nomination.
 5. Ms. Anne Davis steps to the podium. She expresses her support for the nomination.
 6. Mr. Keith Cochran steps to the podium; he is the owner of the property and gives some additional details on its significance.
 7. The Commission discusses the nomination.
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Motion:

1. Mr. Green moves to accept the nomination based on the listed criteria.
 2. Mr. Hill seconds.
 3. Ms. Aguirre asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.
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HRC MINUTES – MARCH 5, 2020 RECOMMENDATION

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**MOWRY-ADDISON HOUSE 5134 CARNEGIE STREET
HISTORIC NOMINATION**

Owner: Keith Cochran 5134 Carnegie Street Pittsburgh, Pa 15201

Ward: 9th

Lot and block: 80-G-239

Nominator: Keith Cochran 5134 Carnegie Street Pittsburgh, Pa 15201
Inspector:

Council District: 7th

Nomination received: 1/17/20

National Register status: Listed:

Proposed changes: Nomination for historic designation.

Discussion:

1. Ms. Quinn makes a short presentation on the property. She states that the nominator found that the property is significant under Criterion 3, exemplification of a distinguished architectural type, style, or design, Criterion 8, exemplification of a significant pattern of neighborhood development or settlement, and Criterion 10, its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh, and that the property does retain integrity.
2. Ms. Aguirre asks for public comment; there is none
3. The Commission discusses the nomination.

Motion:

1. Mr. Green moves to positively recommend the property for historic nomination based on the listed criteria.
2. Mr. Hill seconds.
3. Ms. Aguirre asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.

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PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES –MARCH 10, 2020

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4. DCP-HN-2020-00060, Historic Nomination, 5134 Carnegie Street

Ms. Quinn presented 5134 Carnegie Street nomination in accordance with the attached staff report. She reported that the subject house was built in 1838-1842. She also described the history of ownership, materials built from, and other house characteristics.

Mr. John Axhell from Lawrenceville State Holders supported the nomination. There being no more comments from the Public, the Chairwoman called for questions and comments from the Commissioners.

There being no more comments from the Commissioners, the Chairwoman called for the motion.

MOTION; That the Planning Commission of the City of Pittsburgh finds that the nominations submitted for the MowryAddison House meets the required criteria and integrity standards for listing as city-designated historic structures That the Planning Commission of the City of Pittsburgh make City Council a positive recommendation for historic designation.

MOVED BY: Ms. Dick

SECONDED BY: Ms. Askey

IN FAVOR: Mondor, Burton-Faulk, Blackwell

OPPOSED: None

MOTION CARRIED